Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Unedited transcript

442nd Meeting
Tuesday, 10 June 1997, 3 p.m.
Vienna

Chairman: Mr. RAO (India)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I now declare open the 442nd meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Now that we have concluded our informal consideration of the draft report paragraph by paragraph, we will proceed with the formal adoption of the report. As is our custom, we will adopt the report section by section. Delegations wishing to place their views on record may do so when the appropriate section is under consideration.

Before continuing, on behalf of the Committee I would like to thank the Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Raimundo González (Chile) and the Second Vice-Chairman, Mr. Mouslim Kabbaj (Morocco), as well as the Secretariat for their work in preparing the final report. The fact that we were able to conclude our consideration of it in half a day shows that it was an excellent piece of work.

Document A/AC.105/L.214

The CHAIRMAN: *Paragraphs 1 to 19 are adopted.* Are paragraphs 20 to 26, "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes", and paragraph 1 of document A/AC.105/1997/CRP.7, adopted? *Paragraphs 20 to 26, and paragraph 1, are adopted.*

Document A/AC.105/L.214/Add.1

The CHAIRMAN: This document contains the report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. Are paragraphs 1 to 76, as well as paragraphs 2 and 3 of document A/AC.105/1997/CRP.7, adopted? *Paragraphs 1 to 76, and paragraphs 2 and 3, are adopted.*

Document A/AC.105/L.214/Add.2

The CHAIRMAN: Are paragraphs 1 to 25, on the report of the Legal Subcommittee, adopted? *Paragraphs 1 to 25 are adopted.* Are paragraphs 26 to 32, on the spin-off benefits of space technology, adopted? *Paragraphs 26 to 32 are adopted.*

Are paragraphs 33 to 41, on "Other matters", adopted? *Paragraphs 33 to 41 are adopted.* Are paragraphs 42 to 48, on future work and schedule of meetings, adopted? *Paragraphs 42 to 48 are adopted.*

Document A/AC.105/L.214/Add.3

The CHAIRMAN: This document contains the report of the Preparatory Committee for UNISPACE III. Are paragraphs 1 to 15 adopted? *Paragraphs 1 to 15 are adopted.*

Document A/AC.105/L.214/Add.4

The CHAIRMAN: This document contains the amendments to the report of the Committee. Are the paragraphs contained in this document, as well as paragraph 4 of document A/AC.105/1997/CRP.7, adopted? *These paragraphs are adopted.*

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ecuador.

Mr. L. ARIZAGA (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Not only paragraph 4 but also paragraph 5 of document A/AC.105/1997/CRP.7 should be adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: Are the paragraphs contained in document A/AC.105/L.214/Add.4, as well as both paragraphs 4 and 5 of document A/AC.105/1997/CRP.7, adopted? *These paragraphs are adopted.*

Is the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space adopted as a whole? *The report is adopted.*

I would like to thank distinguished delegates for your cooperation during this session of the Committee. As it is the first time I have experienced the proceedings from this side of the table, I would like to make some concluding remarks.

Concluding remarks by the Chairman

The CHAIRMAN: We have achieved substantial progress on many important issues. In particular, I would like to express my satisfaction with the significant progress achieved as Preparatory Committee for UNISPACE III. The Committee has followed the mandate given to it by the General Assembly and has also charted the way for consideration of space activities in the Committee in the future, through international cooperation. The progress achieved also helps to ensure that the benefits of space science and technology are enjoyed by all countries.

Unfortunately we were unable to reach a consensus on the working paper submitted by the delegation of Germany concerning the geostationary orbit. I look forward to continuing our discussions on this important subject at next year's session of the Legal Subcommittee as well as in this Committee. The intensive discussions held this year will be of significant value to next year's deliberations.

The congenial atmosphere of Vienna has undoubtedly proved conducive to our work and has helped to highlight the spirit of cooperation which prevails among delegations. I would like to thank all of you for your cooperation; the staff of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, who have been so active and diligent; and all conference services staff, who helped make this session a success.

I would like to leave a few thoughts with you. When we started our discussions on UNISPACE III, it was with a great vision. We must essentially solidify our views in this regard. I have hopes and dreams that UNISPACE III will ultimately help lead us to a more equitable world. The world is not a global village in the technical sense, as I mentioned before. One would like to see the benefits of high technology, in particular space technology, reaching the most underdeveloped of the developing countries, and for the betterment of humankind at large.

We all know that interconnectivity, be it to the atmosphere, the geosphere or the biosphere, has made all nations interdependent. There is no point in saying that we have affluent areas and non-affluent areas. What happens in one place affects other places — whether it is the depletion of the ozone layer, destabilization of the greenhouse equilibrium, volcanic eruptions affecting rain precipitation, drought conditions, or flooding.

Can we find global solutions to these problems? Solutions which will be valid for the entire world, whether it is in terms of international global monitoring of the environment and disaster warning systems, or improvement of the communication infrastructure. Today, broadcasting itself has progressed very rapidly: TV broadcasting has taken root but in the developing countries, there is still only one telephone for every 100 people, as opposed to one telephone for every two people in the developed countries. Rural communications are still poor and in some cases non-existent.

We talk about telemedicine; but basic health care information is not even available in many cases. Today we do have the technology to change this. Can we do our utmost, through UNISPACE III, to try and see that some international global system is formed? That should be our vision, a vision where there is a certain amount of equity across the world and thus all people can have a reasonable quality of life. If we can succeed in making this dream come true, to whatever extent, then UNISPACE III will indeed be a great success.

I thank you all for your cooperation, without which we would not have concluded our session more than two days ahead of our scheduled date. The meeting is adjourned.

The session closed at 3.45 p.m.